

⁷⁰³⁹
THE *Bryan (J.)*
Eternal Deity, ^K
OR
EXISTENCE
OF THE
LOGOS,
Our Lord JESUS CHRIST,

Proved by
Nine DEMONSTRATIONS raised from
the Sacred SCRIPTURES.

In a Letter to Mr. PEIRCE.

TOGETHER
With some Reflections on Two Sermons of his,
Preach'd first in his own Place at *Exeter*, and then
in *London*.

AS ALSO
A Remark or Two on his *Western* INQUISITION.

The First Sermon from
Joh. i. 46. *And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good
Thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come,
and see.*

The other on
1 Cor. iii. 11. *For other Foundation can no Man lay, than that
is laid, which is JESUS CHRIST.*

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ETERNAL DEITY,

OR



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NINE DEMONSTRATIONS TAILED FROM
THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.

In a Letter to Mr. P. W. L. C.

TOGETHER

With some Reflections on Two Sermons of his
Preach'd first in his own Place at Lincoln, and
in London.

AS ALSO

A Sermon of Two on his Widow's Magistrate.

The First Sermon from

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more come out of Nazareth? Philip said unto him, Come
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The Eternal DEITY,
or Existence of the Logos,
our Lord JESUS CHRIST;
Proved, &c.

REVEREND SIR,



HO' I am not so happy as to have any Personal Acquaintance with you, yet I honour and esteem you on account of your good Sense, and great Learning, of which you have given sufficient Instances in some Performances of yours, made publick to the World before these unhappy Divisions were so openly on foot.

Having lately perus'd two Sermons of yours, the one on *Joh. i. 46.* the other on *1 Cor. iii. 11.* this Letter is the Result of that Perusal.

There are several Persons, who have neither been concerned in your Assemblies in the *West*, nor the Meetings at *Salters-Hall* (of which I am one) that can say

————— *Jam Proximus ardet*
Ucalegon —————

The Eternal Deity of

And therefore I think that none such can be blamed for using their best Endeavours; either to extinguish, or, at least, to set Bounds to the Combustion.

The Preface to your Sermons I pass over, and shall not concern myself with any private Contests that are between you and the Reverend Mr. *Bradbury*: I believe he is still capable to answer for himself.

After I have made a few Remarks on your Sermons, I shall execute the Advice you give, *Pag. 16, 17. viz.* To search the Scriptures, and see whether the Things you, or your Brethren speak be according to them, or not.

Both which (I hope) I shall perform with all the Candour and Impartiality that I can, and use you no otherways than I desire to be used by you, and all the World in the like Case. I set out in quest of Truth; and if any thing seem to sound harsh to you that is spoke, it will only be on account of the Discovery of that; I am sure not out of any Disrespect or Prejudice to your Person: And if in any thing I be guilty of any real Error, or Mistake, I shall thank you, or any other Person that will be so kind as to inform me better, or set me right.

Sir, I believe, your setting the Blessed *Jesus*, and *Arius*, and their Followers upon a level, as to Matters of Reproach which they suffer'd, is, in several respects, an unguarded Expression, and may be apt to give a Disgust to some good Christians, which you deliver in these Words, *Pag. 5. For a Nazarene was a Term of Reproach then, just as an Arian is now.* By which I think you seem to espouse the Opinions of *Arius*; seeing you insinuate, That he and his Followers are as unjustly reproached now, as our Saviour and his Disciples were then.

In

In the 9th Page of your first Sermon, you seem to banish all Ecclesiastical Censure from the Church, concerning Matters or Errors of Opinion; or, at least, to confine it to such and such Degrees of Illumination, or other Advantages: which, if the erroneous Person has not had, he does not fall under it.

But I presume, Sir, it will be the most difficult Matter to determine the Measure of that Illumination, and those Advantages, which will still render that Rule uncertain, or, at best, precarious. Your Words are these; *But let it be suppos'd that we ourselves are in the right, and our Neighbours in the wrong; yet the judging Persons for their Mistake is a very nice Affair, and requires a Skill much beyond ours to meddle with it.* And again, Pag. 10. *We may imagine Things are very plain to us, and it may be we are right in our Judgment, and that it is really a Truth which we take to be so: yet, tho we are bound to embrace the Truth as we see Evidences of it, we are not bound to judge those who do not see Things as we do: They may be Israelites indeed, in whom is no Guile; and yet for want of some Advantages, which we have had, and which, perhaps, are more owing to some special Turns of Providence, than any prudent Consideration of our own, they may not as yet perceive the Truth.*

You having said so much, I must needs take leave to observe, that most of these Disputes in the first Age of Christianity, that were managed between the Apostles and Judaizing Teachers, were not concerning gross Immoralities, or Sins of Practice; but were relating to Matters of Doctrine and Opinion, such as the Means and Nature of Justification, and the like: And tho 'tis hard to say that they had the same Means of Conviction, or Illumination,

tion, as the Apostles had; and we may very safely assert, that some of these Judaizing Teachers wanted some Advantages which the Apostle *Paul* himself had; and which were, perhaps, more owing to some special Turns of Providence towards him, than any prudent Consideration of his own: and yet the same Apostle, in most of his Epistles, censures and reprimands those, and cautions the Primitive Christians against the dangerous and infectious Contagion of their Errors in Doctrine: *Beware* (says he) *of Dogs, beware of evil Workers, beware of the Concision.* I presume he terms them evil Workers, not on the account of any open Immoralities which they taught or practis'd themselves; but because, pretending to labour in the Gospel, they did, in effect, subvert, and overthrow it, pretending to be Fellow-Workers with the Apostles; but, at the same time, pulled down what they built up.

And moreover, it appears very plain to me, that the Apostle *Paul* invested *Titus* with a Power of suspending these Teachers from exercising any publick Function in the Church, who advanced any Opinions or Principles contrary to the receiv'd Doctrines of the Gospel: For, *saith he*, there are many unruly and vain Talkers and Deceivers, especially they of the Circumcision, *whose Mouths must be stopped*; who subvert whole Houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy Lucre's sake.

And the same Apostle writing to *Timothy*, *1 Tim. i. 3.* says, That he besought him to abide still at *Ephesus* when he went into *Macedonia*, that he might charge some that they teach no other Doctrine.

No other Doctrine, I suppose, than what the Apostle had taught there and in other Churches

ches himself : and of the Doctrines he taught, we find he had been very particular in that Doctrine concerning the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ ; he had, in the plainest Terms, taught and asserted the Truth and Veracity of both his Divine and Human Nature. And to give the Churches of God the clearer Conception of them, both then and in all succeeding Ages, he sets the one several times in opposition to the other, that they may appear more distinct. *And, without Controversy, great is the Mystery of Godliness, God was manifest in the Flesh, &c.* ^{1 Tim. iii. 16.}

Take heed therefore to yourselves and to all the Flock, over which the Holy Ghost has made you Overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he has purchased with his own Blood. ^{A&. xx. 28.}

Who being in the Form of God, thought it no Robbery to be equal with God ; but made himself of no Reputation, and took upon him the Form of a Servant, and was made in the likeness of Men. ^{Phil. ii. 6, 7.}

The Apostle writing to the Romans, sums up the Privileges and Advantages the Jews had above other Nations, viz. They were Israelites, to them pertain'd the Adoption, and the Glory, and the Covenants, and the giving of the Law, and the Service of God ; whose are the Fathers, and of whom as concerning the Flesh Christ came, who is over all God blessed for ever. *Amen.* ^{Rom. ix. 4, 5.}

In all which Scriptures he is careful to distinguish between the Divine and Human Nature ; and having so often inculcated the same Doctrine himself, desires Timothy, that no Doctrine contrary to it should be taught by any Persons whatsoever, whatever Defect they had in their Illuminations, or how much soever they

they were at a loss for some special Turns of Providence, which others had.

I very readily agree with you in what you say Pag. 21, 22. *It seems evident to me, that there must be some doctrinal Principles that must be fundamental to Christianity, and essentially necessary to be believed.*

And, Pag. 23. you give a particular Instance, viz. *The very Notion of a Foundation plainly carries this in it, That it is somewhat absolutely necessary: You may as well suppose that a House can be built without a Foundation, as you can suppose that a Person can be a Christian without the Knowledge of Christ, without believing him to be the Saviour of the World.*

The Instance you bring is very good, viz. That no Person can be a Christian without the Knowledge of Christ: but then I think your Explication of it, viz. without believing him to be the Saviour of the World, is wretchedly lame, as including only the Knowledge of his Office; whereas I believe it is generally allowed, that the Knowledge of his Person is previous to that; and therefore the Apostle insists upon the Knowledge of his Person, as necessary to the Knowledge of God. He is Anti-Christ that denieth the Father and the Son; which Words I take to be spoken personally of the Father and the Son, and not with respect to any Office: And again, he that denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father.

1 Joh. ii. 22.
23.
Joh. v. 23. All Men are enjoined to honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.

Now as we are careful to know exactly the Titles of Honour of those Persons, to whom we are about to make our Address, or to write; so one should think it were necessary, to know the Person of him that is as much the Object of

of Honour as is God himself. And what you have said in the succeeding Page, viz. 22. with respect to the Explication of this essential Doctrine, is so superficial and jejune, that it might have been said by *Faustus*, or *Lelius Socinus*, and they safe enough in the Profession of their Tenets still.

You conclude your second Sermon, Pag. 31. with an Exhortation to entertain High and Honourable Thoughts of this our Glorious Redeemer, conceiving of him according to what the Scriptures represent him to be, &c. where, I must needs confess, you have said some Things that are very plausible. 'Tis pity however, that you should have given us the sixth Verse ^{Phil. ii. 6.} of the second Chap. of the Epistle to the *Philippians* by halves: you mention our Saviour indeed as a Person, who *was in the Form of God*; but then you entirely pass over in silence, the other Clause of the Verse, viz. (*thought it no Robbery to be equal with God*) and begin the 7th Verse.

Sir, I think this Procedure is neither candid nor fair, it was an Imposition on your Audience, and an Injustice done to the sacred Scriptures, by suppressing so valuable a Part of them; it was an Injury done to the Son of God, by concealing one of his most glorious Characters. I shall not presume to dive into your Thoughts, but I can freely leave it to your own Ingenuity, to confess whether the Omission of this Clause, when it lay so directly in your way, (you citing the Words immediately adjoining to it both before and after) was not on the account of your darling Principle the *Subordination*, because you foresaw that the Equality mention'd by the Apostle would overthrow it.

This may shew us how much some Men are wedded to their own Sentiments; for how much

soever they may extol the sacred Scriptures as a Rule to which they will always adhere, yet when an Expression of the Holy Ghost stands in their way, it must be jostled out to make room for their own contrary Opinion.

And what Disputes soever Men have raised concerning a *Subordination*, (which after all is not a Scripture-Term) they ought to vanish and disappear at the Thoughts that an *Equality* is asserted there.

I confess, that some Divines have used the Word *Subordination* with respect to the sacred Trinity, and were counted Orthodox enough still; but then they understood, and explained it with respect to their Order, or Manner of subsisting, or with regard to Christ's Mediatory Office, not with respect to their Nature; in this Sense they asserted there was the most perfect Equality: But I am apt to think there are some shrewd Symptoms that the Word in your Sense has somewhat of another Tendency. And if some small Incisions have already cast such pestilential Fumes, 'tis not hard to guess what deformed and corrupted Spawn a thorough *Dissection* will produce; and which will be abandoned too, as soon as they are divested of their gilded Name.

I shall now turn to the 6th Observation of your first Sermon; *Pag. 16, 17.* where you advise us to search the Scriptures, and propose these as the only Test to prove Doctrines by. Your Observation is this, *viz.*

The Way to know the Certainty of Things, is to make tryal of them; *Come and see.*

In your enlargement on this Observation, you have taken care to apply the whole of this Transaction, between *Nathanael* and *Philip*, to yourself, in your present Circumstances; but,
waving

waving this, I shall transcribe some part of your Enlargement on this Observation, that concerns our present Purpose. “ You say this “ is a Rule which we may safely give with reference to all Points of Doctrine, and more “ especially where honest Men offer any thing “ to the World, *Prove all Things, hold fast that* 1 Thess. v. “ *which is good.* They that distrust the Force ^{21.} “ and Evidence of Truth, or the Goodness of “ the Cause they would maintain, may propose a different Rule, and tell you that you “ should prove nothing, but hold fast what “ fallible Men have taught you : I must own I “ know no Principle of my Religion that will “ not bear a strict Examination, and thorough “ Inquiry ; and therefore my Business shall always be to appear to the Understandings and “ Consciences of Men. You hear how we are “ reviled, slandered, and abused : According “ to the general Vogue, nothing good is to be “ expected from us. Would you know whether our Principles, or Worship are such as “ Men confidently report ? *Come and see ;* see “ with your own Eyes, and judge for yourselves, “ and take not things blindly upon trust, from “ those who are afraid to see themselves ; and “ therefore resolve never to look into Matters, “ but sit down contented with the Traditions “ of their Fathers. *Come and see,* whether we “ say any thing that is not agreeable to the “ Rule of our holy Religion : Search the Scriptures, and see whether the Things that we “ speak are according to them, or not.”

From all which it appears plain to me, that you cast some very false Aspersions upon all the Protestant Reformed Churches in Europe, with respect to the Doctrine of the Sacred Trinity, (the Dispute now in agitation, and which you

have here in view) viz. That they distrust the Force and Evidence of Truth; and that 'tis their Doctrine that Christians should prove nothing by the Scriptures, but hold fast what fallible Men have taught them, that are afraid to see themselves; and therefore never resolve to look into Matters, but sit down contented with the Traditions of their Fathers; that the Doctrines of their Antagonists are bore down by the general Vogue, and not by Scripture-Arguments.

Sir, after so great an Outcry, I believe it will be difficult for you to prove the several Particulars, with which you impeach all those who are not of your Mind, as to that Doctrine you point at.

That our Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ is an Eternal, Necessary, and Independent Being, is an Assertion maintained (I think) by all the Protestant Reformed Churches: a Doctrine, which, I believe, is as much a parting Point between them and our modern *Arians* now, as that of the *ὁμολοσιον* was between those call'd Orthodox, and the *Arians* of old; and yet, I believe, it will be no difficult Task to demonstrate from the sacred Scriptures the Truth of this Doctrine; and consequently to prove, that those who are your Antagonists, are not afraid to see themselves, but have look'd into Matters, and not sat down contented with the Traditions of their Fathers, if any such Traditions there were.

Tho, Sir, you can't well digest the 5th and 6th Answers of the Assembly's Catechism; yet, I believe, you will very readily concur with them in a Clause of the 8th Paragraph, and 1st Chapter of their Confession of Faith, viz. *The Old Testament in Hebrew, (which was the native*

native Language of the People of God of old) and the New Testament in Greek (which, at the time of writing of it, was most generally known to the Nations) being immediately inspired by God, and by his singular Care and Providence kept pure in all Ages, are therefore authentical: so as in all Controversies of Religion, the Church is finally to appeal to them.

This being also the known Tenet of all the Reformed Churches, you will not blame me, if, in searching the Scriptures, in order to prove the above-mention'd Doctrine, I should look into the Originals themselves.

The Doctrine which I shall bring to the Test of the Sacred Scriptures, is this, viz.

That the *Logos*, or our Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ, is an *Eternal*, *Necessary*, and *Independent Being*; which I shall endeavour to prove, with God's Assistance, by the following Demonstrations.

My first Argument or Demonstration, may I *Demonst.* (I think) with good Reason be raised from *Prov. viii Chap. from 22 to the 30th Ver. Prov. viii.* *מְעוֹלָם*, and *מִקְרָמִי אֵדָע* with several other *22, 30.* Words used there, are in the Original expressive of an absolute **Eternal Duration** or **Existence**.

If it should be objected, that this Place of Scripture is somewhat obscure, and cannot, with any great Assurance, be applied to our Saviour; to this I answer,

1st, That it can be applied to him with greater Assurance, and in a more satisfying way than ever yet it has been applied to, or explain'd of any thing else. But,

2^{dly}, I answer; 'Tis as plain and clear concerning our Lord, as that Dispensation would ad-

admit of : And then the most material Things there are illustrated and made plain by the Gospel ; 'tis there where our Lord, in the plainest Terms, is called *the Wisdom of God*. And the Beginning of the Gospel according to *John*, seems to me to be a clear Comment on these Words : *The Lord possess'd me in the beginning of his way, before his Works of old* ; which Words are almost repeated by the *Apostle* : *In the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, the same was in the Beginning with God*.

And moreover, *Solomon* having waved all secular Greatness in his Request to God, asked of him Wisdom only ; one would think he had not sufficiently obtain'd his Desire [which nevertheless God promised to grant] if so be he had not some extraordinary Revelations of *Christ*, who is the Fountain of Wisdom itself ; and these extraordinary Discoveries of our Lord *Jesus* seem to be more evidently couched in this Chapter, than in any other Place of his Writings : Lay aside but this, and lay them all together, He will be so far from excelling *David* in this kind of Wisdom, a Prince that warm'd the Throne before him, and who, as we know, had several Flights and Raptures in the Book of *Psalms* concerning our Saviour, the Knowledge of whom is the most perfect Wisdom ; that He will come much short of him in true Wisdom, which is contrary to the divine Promise.

Rome, in its Pagan State, having raised many sumptuous Temples for the Service of the Heathen Gods, *Constantine the Great*, when converted to the Christian Religion, resolved to erect a glorious Fabrick for the Service of the true God : He did so, and, when erected, dedicated it to the Eternal Wisdom mentioned in

Sancta
Sophia,
to whom
dedicated.

this

this Chapter, and which is still known by the Name of *Sancta Sophia*.

This vast Monument of the *Roman Greatness*, after they had embraced Christianity, and which still remains at *Constantinople* to this day, is a lasting Gloss, and good Commentary on this Chapter; and informs us, that the Primitive Church, before the Times of *Arius*, by *Wisdom* mention'd here, understood a *Divine Person*; which, tho I don't bring as a convincing Proof, yet, I think, to an unbiass'd Mind, it may serve as a good Illustration.

The second Demonstration is founded in the 2^d *Demonst.* Name יהוה *Jehovah*, which, in the Scripture, is asserted to be a Name proper only to God, *אֲבִי יְהוָה חוּא שְׁמִי* *I Jehovah, that is my Name.* Isa. xlii.8. I do not find that this Name, in the sacred Scriptures, is so much as once ascribed to any Creature in a proper Sense.

And if the *Socinians*, who are glad to lay hold on any Shadow of a Text to cloud the Eternal Deity of our Lord, should assert the contrary; I am ready to oppose it, and to meet them on that *Plan*.

It is a Name that is expressive of God's Eternity, of his Existence from *everlasting to everlasting*: and therefore it is the Assertion of *Aben Ezra*, [who must needs be suppos'd to be well acquainted with his own Language] יהוה *est proprium Dei Nomen, ipsum ab Essentia sua denominans, q. d. Ens existens ab Eterno, & in Eternum.* *

* *Jehovah is a proper Name of God, and which denominates Him from His Essence, and imports as much as tho we should say, God is a Being that has existed from Eternity, and which will exist to Eternity.*

The

The Septuagint in their Version have, for the most part, rendered the Name יהוה by the Word *Kévous*, but 'tis generally confess'd (I think) that they have not reached the *Emphasis* of the Original : and most of our Translations are herein defective also. The *French* may justly be reputed the best, which always renders the Word *Jehovah* by † *L'Eternel*, the *Eternal*; and 'tis hard, if not impossible, to express it fully in any one Word of another Language.

The Apostle *John* has given us the most comprehensive Sense of it; ὁ ἄν, καὶ ὁ ἦν, καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος,
 Rev. i. 8. *which is, and which was, and which is to come.*

'Tis true, I have said nothing unless I shew that the Name יהוה *Jehovah* is given to our Lord in the most proper Sense, which, I think, is plain from these Words of *Jeremiah*; Behold the Days come, saith the Lord, that I will
 Jer. xxiii. raise unto *David* a righteous Branch—— in
 5, 6. his Days *Judah* shall be saved, and *Israel* shall dwell safely; and this is the Name whereby he shall be called יהוה צדקנו *Jehovah our Righteousness*. If any think that our Saviour is not meant here, we shall take care to rectify them in that Error: From hence, I think, is demonstrated his Eternal Existence.

3 *Demonst.* The third Demonstration of our Saviour's *Eternal Existence* shall be raised from two con-

† *Jeremi. xxiii Chap. 5, 6 Ver.* Voicy les jours viennent dit *L'Eternel*, que je feray lever a *David* un jermé juste, & il regnera comme Roy; il adressera, & exercera Jugement & Justice en la Terre.

En les jours *Juda* sera mis a sauvete, *Israel* habitera en assurance; & c'est icy son nom duquel on l'appellera, *L'Eternel* nôtre Justice.

tra-

tradiſtory Propoſitions, which I ſhall here lay down.

Propoſition I. The *Logos*, or our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, with reſpect to his Divine Nature, hath eternally exiſted in the moſt abſolute and perfect Senſe; and therefore he having had an Eternal Exiſtence in the moſt proper and abſolute Senſe that *Eternal* can be taken in, there is no imaginable Period of Duration in which it can be ſaid He began to exiſt, or He began to be.

Propoſition II. The *Logos*, or our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, with reſpect to his Divine Nature, hath not eternally exiſted in the moſt abſolute and perfect Senſe; and therefore he not having had an Eternal Exiſtence in the moſt proper and abſolute Senſe that *Eternal* may be taken in, there muſt needs be an imaginable Period of Duration, in which it may be ſaid He began to exiſt, or He began to be.

I am willing that all the Laws of a true Con-^{A true Con-}tradiction, ſhould be found between theſe two ^{tradiction.} Propoſitions; viz. *Idem, de eodem, ſecundum Idem, ad Idem, eodem modo, & eodem tempore, affirmatur & negatur.*

Theſe then being true Contradictions, and not univerſal, but particular Propoſitions, both you yourſelf, and all the other *great Maſters of Reaſon*, muſt of Neceſſity grant with me, that they cannot both be true: And then, on the other hand, it is as certain that they cannot both be falſe. 'Tis plain then to a Demonſtration, that one of theſe Propoſitions muſt be true, and the other falſe; and ſeeing they are everſive of one another, a Demonſtration of the

Absurdity of one of these Propositions will serve for ever to establish and fix the *Truth* of the other.

I shall then endeavour to shew the Absurdity of the second Proposition, which I shall demonstrate in the following manner.

He from whom all Things had their *Beginning* that ever began to *Exist*, or began to *Be*, must himself be without Beginning in the most proper and absolute Sense.

But all Things that ever began to exist, had their Beginning from the *Logos*, our Lord Jesus Christ. And

Therefore he himself must be without Beginning, and consequently his *Existence* is *Eternal* in the most proper and absolute Sense.

The major Proposition wants, I think, no Confirmation ; and the minor is plain from *John* Joh.i. 10. *The World was made by him.* This proves it in the Lump, and which I take to be as comprehensive an Expression in all respects, as that of the *Apostle*, *Act. xvii. 24. God that made the World*, by which I believe he meant the whole System of *Created Beings*, as they are opposed to God their Creator. But then to descend to Particulars: *By our Lord Jesus Christ*, Coloss. i. 16, 17. *says the Apostle, were all Things created that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, visible, and invisible ; whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers, all Things were created by him and for him, and he is before all Things, and by him all Things consist.*

Here, I think, is a full Enumeration of Particulars, and of all the Species of Creatures, and that not any one Creature in the whole Creation may escape falling within the Verge of his Creating Power, the Spirit of God in the most emphatical and comprehensive manner of Expression

pression casts them all in at once; *All Things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made*: where the Apostle asserts our Saviour to be the Creator of all Things. First, Positively, by ascribing the Creation to him; which he farther confirms Negatively, by excluding all others from the Honour of so great a Work.

But if any should adhere to the *Arian Scheme*, and which some of the *Socinians*, who have made more advanc'd Steps than their Brethren, do also embrace, *viz.* That the *Logos*, our Lord, was only made use of as an *Instrument* in *Creation*, and that he himself is to be included among these things that were made: To this I answer, If the Lord Jesus will not be allowed by them to be the principal efficient Cause in Creation, but the instrumental Cause only; then this Instrument was either uncreated, or created: if uncreated, it must be Eternal in the most proper Sense, and then we have what we contend for; if created, then this Instrument either made and created itself, or was created by another: but this Instrument could not create itself, because this would overthrow a known Maxim approved of by all the *grand Masters of Reason*, *viz. Operari sequitur esse, Operation or Action is only a Consequent of Existence.* But if we suppose this Instrument to have created itself, we must reasonably conclude, that it existed, or had a Being before it entered upon the Action of Creation; and if it created itself, we must again suppose that it did not exist till after it had created itself: But these Suppositions would render our Lord *Seipso Prior & Posterior*; that is, *That he existed before he did exist*, or that he did not begin to exist or begin to be, till after he had operated and created himself; or that he operated before

he had any Existence - all which is abominably absurd, contrary to the common Maxim I have mention'd, and gross Contradictions.

And as I have demonstrated from Reason, that this Instrument could not create itself, so it is as demonstrable from the Sacred Scripture, that this *Instrument* [as they call our Lord] was not created by any other; because by him were all things created that are in Heaven, and in Earth, visible and invisible, &c. and without him was not any thing made, that was made, any other being excluded. If this Instrument was created at all, it must have created itself; but, having by an infallible Demonstration prov'd the Absurdity of this, it remains, that our Lord must of Necessity be uncreated, and Eternal in the most proper Sense.

Coloss. i. 16.

Joh. i. 3.

Having now demonstrated the Absurdity of the second Proposition, the Truth of the first, viz. That the *Logos* has eternally existed in the most absolute and perfect Sense that *Eternal* can be taken in, is for ever establish'd, which was the Thing to be demonstrated.

4 *Demonst.* IV. The fourth Demonstration is plain, by comparing *Isa. chap. xli. ver. 4.* with *Rev. chap. i. ver. 11.* The words in the Old Testament are these, and are very emphatical in the Original, *Isa. xli. 4.* אֲנִי יְהוָה רִאשׁוֹן וְאַחֲרִי אֲנִי הוּא, *I Jehovah the First, and with the Last, I He.* And this exactly agrees with what we have in the New Testament, *Rev. i. 11.* Εγώ εἰμι τὸ Α καὶ τὸ Ω, ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος, *I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last.* Here the essential Property of an eternal Existence, or an Eternity which excludes a Beginning, and which is so in the most absolute Sense, viz. to be *first*, and to exist before all other Beings, is appropriated to our Lord *Jesus*

Jus Christ, being that glorious Excellency which the Supreme God lays claim to in the Place we have cited out of the Old Testament, to distinguish him from the false Deities, which were formed only in time, whereas he is *Eternal*. For unless we understand the words spoken by *Isaiah*, as carrying a true Opposition in them, *viz.* opposing something that is eternal, to some things that have existed only in time, we lose their Design and Intention: For when the Supreme God calls himself *First*, we must understand that this Character or Perfection exceeds the Bounds of Time, and is *Eternal*; for Time can never be opposed to itself, Thousands of Years in this respect don't alter the Property of Time. Some of the Creatures have existed some Thousands of Years before others, and cannot lay claim to an extraordinary Excellency on that account; and therefore when *God*, by *Isaiah*, calls himself the *First*, I think we are to understand it so, as that no Being whatsoever existed before him, and then it must needs carry *Eternity* in the Conception of it, in the most absolute Sense, an *Eternity* that excludes a *Beginning*. But this distinguishing Character of the Eternal God, in the *Old Testament*, our Lord, in the *New*, ascribes to himself, in its most extensive Dimensions.

V. The fifth Demonstration is founded on that 5 *Demonst.* Account that our Saviour gave of himself, *John*, *John viii. chap. viii. ver. 58.* *Before Abraham was, ἐγώ εἰμι, 58.* *I am.* This short Expression, in a narrow Compass, is a comprehensive Description of an eternal Existence, and exactly agrees with that Definition, that the Schoolmen and Philosophers have at length centered in, of *Eternity*, *viz.* *Interminabilis Vita tota simul & perfecta Possessio.*
Our

Our Lord in this may also allude to *Exod. iii. 14.* *I Am hath sent me unto you ;* and this was the Name whereby the *Supreme God* described his *Immutability* and *Eternal Existence*.

6 *Demon.* VI. The sixth Demonstration shall be raised from *Heb. chap. vii. ver. 1—3.* where there is a Person mentioned called *Melchisedek*, of whom *Heb. x. 3.* the Spirit of God asserts, that he was *without Father, without Mother, without Descent, having neither Beginning of Days, nor End of Life.*

We know that some of the most Learned of the Antients have asserted, that this was an Appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ himself, as a Prelude, in order to his Incarnation ; and some later Writers have affirmed, that their Arguments for this Assertion have never yet been answered, and that they never will ; such as, (1.) It can't well be thought that any meer Man should, at that time, be greater than *Abraham*, who appears to have been the only *Feoffee* of the Covenant of Grace. (2.) That 'tis impossible to think that any mere Man should be without Father or Mother, without Descent, having neither Beginning of Days, nor End of Life. (3.) That 'tis witnessed of *Melchisedek*, that *he liveth*, and that *he abideth* a Priest *continually*. (4.) What seems to me to be as unanswerable as any of the rest, is, that the Apostle himself asserts him, of whom these things are spoken, to be our Lord, who sprang out of *Judah*, of which Tribe no Man, says he, gave Attendance at the Altar, &c. *ver. 13, 14.*

I am sure these Arguments cannot with any good Grace be denied by those, who must needs have every thing to be believed in the Scriptures, asserted *in Terminis*, and contained in Words and Syllables only. But for my part, the

tho I do not renounce this Opinion, yet [waving the laborious Trifling of those who pretend to point out *Shem*, or some other of the Old Testament Fathers as the Person] I rather incline to think that *Melchisedek* was a Prince, or a Father that lived in these Parts [there being but little Difference then, in that Age, between the *Regal* and the *Paternal Power*] whose Descent and Genealogy the Holy Ghost designed entirely to conceal from us, that hemight thereby become a Type or Shadow of the Eternity of the *Logos*, our Lord *Jesus Christ*; and therefore there is no mention made, in the Sacred Scriptures, or any where else, of his Parents, nor of his Birth or Death, nor from whom he received his Priesthood, or to whom he resigned it : whereas *Aaron's* Pedigree may be traced up to *Adam*; and we know also who invested him with the *Sacerdotal Garments*, and to whom he resigned them.

Exod. vi.
22, 23.
I Chron.
vi. 50, 52.
Exod.
xxix.

As the Scripture then represents this *Melchisedek* to us, he was [supposing him to be one of the human Race] as capable of being a Shadow of the eternal Existence of our Lord, as the Scape-Goat, or other Things of small Value; which, under the legal Dispensation, were nevertheless Shadows of that which was in the most absolute and perfect Sense of *infinite Worth*; and if all the Iniquities, and all the Transgressions, and all the Sins of the Children of *Israel* were laid upon the Head of the Goat, yet, after all, it was only the Shadow of him; who, on account of his inherent Strength, had the Iniquities of us all laid on him, and who, by his real Merits, removed them from us, and carried them away.

Lev. xvi.
21.

Having premised this, 'tis plain, to a Demonstration, that this *Melchisedek* was either
our

our Lord himself in Person, or some good Man called out to be a Type and Shadow of him; either Sense will equally serve my present purpose: But seeing there is no apparent necessity to oblige us to carry the thing quite so high, I have rather chose to understand it in the last Sense, and which can be no Injury to the Sacred Text either, to which I would always shew a singular regard; because what is but darkly ascribed to the Shadow, is still to be understood to be plainly and ultimately terminated in the Substance, and attributed to that in the most proper Sense.

My Demonstration then runs thus; the *Logos*, our Lord here meant, must be eternal, in the most absolute Sense; for as *μήτε ζωῆς τέλος ἔχων*, *having no End of Life*, denotes an Eternity, that, in the most absolute Sense, excludes an End; so the other Part of the Assertion, Heb.vii.3. *μήτε ἀρχῇ ἡμερῶν ἔχων*, *having no Beginning of Days*, must needs also denote an Eternity, that, in the most proper and absolute Sense, excludes a Beginning; it being plain, that the Spirit of God designed that these two Expressions should be Parallels, and the one, in all respects, should be as comprehensive and extensive as the other.

And whosoever was the Type or Shadow, it is plain our Lord is ultimately designed and pointed to in the words. This then that is asserted of him, *viz.* that *he has no End of Life*, is either to be understood, that he shall exist eternally, in the most absolute and proper Sense, or that, after an indefinite Duration, there will be a Period put to his Existence: but the very Thoughts of the last of these would excite Horror and Aversion in the Mind of every Christian; and I cannot see why the same Indignation should not be roused in us, when we hear

hear the other Clause of the Assertion hamper'd or confin'd in any respect; viz. *That He has no Beginning of Days*: that is, there is no Period of Duration in which He began to exist, or began to be; and therefore to take this Character in its full Extent, and to understand it as we are of Necessity obliged to understand the other, we must assert, that He has eternally existed in the most absolute and proper Sense, *having neither Beginning of Days nor End of Life*; which was the Thing to be demonstrated. So that here is an absolute Eternity, *a Parte ante*, and *a Parte post*, as, I think, the Schoolmen call it, attributed to him.

I believe we all understand that Person mentioned in *Dan. vii. 9.* to be the Eternal God, who has eternally existed in the most proper Sense, and yet He is only call'd נְצִיחַ יְמֵי *the Ancient of Days*: What Conceptions then ought we to form of *One*, with respect to His Existence, who is said to have no Beginning of Days? Of *One* whose Existence exceeds all the Bounds of Time, [which we must needs suppose to have commenc'd with the first Being that was created] and is measur'd only by *Eternity* absolutely consider'd: Of *One* whose Existence, as it had no Beginning, so His Being shall have no End.

VII. The seventh Demonstration is founded ⁷ *Demonst.* on *Micah, Chap. v. Ver. 2.* But thou Bethlehem ^{Micah. v.} Ephratah, *tho thou be little among the Thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been מִימֵי זֵקֶן מִקֶּדֶם* from of Old, from the Days of Eternity. That this was said of our Lord, we have the conjoint Testimony of the

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Mat. ii. 6. *Jewish* and of the *Christian Church* : so ample an Evidence, sets it beyond all dispute.

One of these Words is used *Gen. xxi. 33.*

Gen. xxi. אֱלֹהֵינוּ, *the Everlasting God.*

33.

And another of them is made use of *Deut.*

Deut. xxxiii. 27. אֱלֹהֵינוּ קָדֵם, *the Eternal God* ; but

xxxiii. 27. then in *Micah*, both these Words are joined together, and are an ample Proof of our Lord's Eternal Existence in the most proper Sense ; and consequently his Eternal Deity is here set in opposition to his Humanity ; and his Existence, or *Goings forth from Everlasting*, peculiar to his Divine Nature, are oppos'd to his Coming forth from *Bethlehem*, proper to the Human Nature, which existed and came forth when the

Gal. iv. 4. *Fulness of Time* was come.

8 *Demonst.* VIII. The eighth Demonstration is evident from the 90th *Psal*m, compared with some other Texts of Scripture, and runs thus :

He that created the World hath eternally existed in the most absolute Sense ; but the *Logos*, our Lord, created the World, and must have eternally existed in the most absolute Sense.

Psal. xc. 2. The major Proposition is plain from *Psal*m xc. *Ver. 2.* *Before the Mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the Earth, and the World,* וּמֵעוֹלָם עַד-עוֹלָם אַתָּה אֵל FROM EVERLASTING TO EVERLASTING THOU ART GOD.

The Words are as expressive of an Existence absolutely *Eternal*, and which excludes a Beginning, as any Words that Language does afford, and they are as expressive too of such an *Eternity*, as admits of no End.

Joh. i. 3. The minor Proposition is plain from *Joh. i. 10.* *The World was made by him ; and, Ver. 3. all Things were made by him, and without him was not any Thing made that was made.* Nor can our Lord

Lord be said to be an Instrument only, because there was none used in Creation, *Isa. xliv. 24. Isa. xliv. God stretched forth the Heavens alone, and spread abroad the Earth by himself. Jer. xxxii. 17. God made the Heavens and the Earth by his Great Power* : And we know that Power is an Essential Attribute of God. And moreover, I have refuted this Whim by the third Demonstration.

When the Apostles converted the Heathen Nations to Christianity, we must certainly believe that they instructed them in the Knowledge of the true God, whose Existence is eternal ; and therefore the Apostle tells the *Thessalonians*, *That they turned from Idols to God, to serve the living and true God.* *1 Thess. i.* We must also reasonably suppose, that it was the same Object of Divine Worship that the *Thessalonians* were brought to serve, that he endeavour'd to instruct the *Athenians* in the Knowledge of, *Act. xvii. 24.* whom he calls *God that made the World.* And I do firmly believe that it was one and the same Divine Essence that he speaks of, *Rom. i. 20. For the invisible Things of him from the Creation of the World are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his Eternal Power, and [Eternal] Godhead.*

IX. The ninth Demonstration shines with the brightest Rays of Evidence, from *Isa. Chap. ix. Isa. ix. 6. Ver. 6. For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the Government shall be upon his Shoulders, and his Name shall be called the Mighty God* אֱלֹהֵינוּ *the Father of Eternity.* From which I argue, that He that is the everlasting Father, or Father of Eternity, must needs himself be Eternal, or have Eternally existed in the most absolute Sense ; which was the Thing to

be demonstrated : And none will question this, I believe, to be meant of our Lord.

SIR,

I have not troubled you with any Tradition of the Fathers, unless you account the Prophets and Apostles such : I have searched the Scriptures, and in my Search have found what amounts to more, with respect to the Eternal Deity, or Eternal Existence of our Lord, than all the Confessions of all the Reformed Churches, which I have yet seen, lay them all together.

I shall take leave to add to these Demonstrations the following Arguments :

Whatsoever is Eternal in the most absolute Sense, is Infinite :

But our Lord is Eternal in the most absolute Sense, and therefore the *Logos*, our Lord, is Infinite.

If any Person thinks that the major Proposition wants to be proved, I shall afterwards gratify him in that.

The minor Proposition I have proved by nine Demonstrations ; and if you, or any other could invalidate eight of them, yet the remaining one will still make good my Assertion.

I farther argue thus ;

Whatsoever is Infinite, is endow'd or invested with the most absolute Perfections, and not affected with the least Imperfection.

But our Lord is Infinite in the most proper Sense. And

Therefore he is endow'd with the most absolute Perfections, and affected with no Imperfection.

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The minor Proposition wants no Proof, and the major is also granted by yourself, seeing you assert that *Infinity* PROPERLY CARRIES THE NOTION OF *absolute Perfection* in it*.

And it will therefore inevitably follow, that the *Logos*, our Lord, cannot be subordinate, which is a very great Imperfection; and therefore your repeated Principle, the *Subordination*, ^{Subordination exploded.} in the Sense in which you take it, must necessarily be exploded, as being inconsistent with the Notion of a *Being* that is infinitely perfect, or who must needs possess every Perfection to the utmost Extent.

SIR,

Unless you fully satisfy yourself and others, that the Existence of the *Logos*, our Lord, is not Eternal in the most absolute Sense, I don't think it possible for you, or any Man, to stave off several Absurdities from clogging your *Hypothesis*, which Hypothesis seems to be pretty plainly set down in your *Western Inquisition* †.

That you hold the *Subordination*, without holding the *Three Persons to be one Being*; and therefore you assert that they are three different, or distinct Beings, or Essences, one supreme and independent Being, and two inferior dependent ones: this seems to me plain from your own Words.

If you should enquire how I bring my own Hypothesis to bear; to this I reply, As the whole Scheme of what I have said is laid in the sacred Scriptures, so I am willing it shall end there: and therefore tho the 7th ver. of the 5th

* Mr. Peirce's *Western Inquisition*, pag. 20.

† *Western Inquisition*, pag. 137.—139, &c.

1 John
v. 7.

chap. of the 1st Epistle of John, were extorted from me, [which, nevertheless, I am resolved it shall not, till such times as I see better Authorities for dismissing it, than I can produce for its being *genuine*] I can fully satisfy myself by reflecting on what our Lord himself has said,

John x.
25.—39.

John x. 25—39.

It is very plain that our Lord several times, within the Compass of a few Verses, there speaks of the Father, and of himself, as two distinct *Persons*, or *Subsistences*; and there is nothing plainer, than that in the 30th ver. he asserts Himself and the Father to be *one*.

Could we but all agree about the true Meaning of the Word *One*, I am apt to think it would go near to end the Controversy. I know the *Anti-Arian* is ready to add *God, one God*.

The *Arians* and *Socinians* exclaim against this, as an Injustice offered to the Sacred Text, because the word *God* is not there in Letters; and at the same time allow that they are one in Will and Affections; and even this is not found in *Terminis*, and if it be a Truth, yet we may justly doubt if it be all the Truth, or the first Truth that appears in the Words. Our Lord, in the Context, had been speaking concerning the Preservation and Safety of his Sheep, says they were very safe in his Hands, and that none was endowed with so much Power, as to be able to wrest them from thence; that if any suspected his Ability to secure them, his Father was greater than all Opposers, and none was able to pluck them out of his Hands; and hence it is, I believe, that the Saints are said

1 Pet. i. 5. to be kept by the Power of God through Faith, unto Salvation. And then our Lord adds, That He and the Father were *one*; so that tho we should consider them *one* in Will and Affection, yet
we

we should offer Violence to our *Reason*, and do Injustice to the Scripture, did we not conclude them to be *one* in Power too; this is all along the Strain of the Context, and is very plainly founded in the Words. Now we know that *Power* is one of God's Essential Attributes.

But to wave all our own Consequences from the Words on either Side :

We may safely listen to the Consequence that the *Jews* drew from our *Saviour's* Assertion; from his saying that he and the Father were *one*, they immediately concluded that he asserted himself to be God, that he was guilty of Blasphemy, and deserved to die: *For a Good Work we stone thee not, but for Blasphemy, and because* ver. 33. *that thou being a Man, makest thyself God.* And, in my mind, we have no reason to doubt but the *Jews* meant the *Supreme and Eternal God*, as he was described to them by *Moses*, Deuter. vi. 4. Deut. vi. יהוה אלהי בו יהוה ואחד, *Jehovah our God is one Jehovah*; or, as we render it, *The Lord our God is one Lord.*

The *Jews* therefore understood our Lord, that he asserted himself to be *one* in *Essence* with the Supreme God, their *Jehovah*; and indeed our Saviour seems to argue from a Unity of *Power*, to a Unity of *Essence*. Our Lord allows that they understood him right, and therefore he does not revoke, or retract any thing he had said, but strengthens and confirms it in the following Verses. By an Argument drawn from Magistrates, he argues from the less to the Greater, which was necessary for the present Occasion, and which he used as a lawful Mean to preserve Life, without rectifying them as to any Error which they had contracted from his Assertion; which we may be sure he would have done, had they been in the least danger of an Error that way,

John. v.
17, 18.

way, which must needs be fatal in its Consequences : nay, he seems to confirm them in their Consequence from his Words, by an Expression which he knew they would look upon as equivalent to what he had said before : In 36 ver. he calls himself the Son of God, which in chap. v. ver. 18. they had look'd upon as a making of himself equal with God : *Jesus answer'd them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work ; therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.*

The Sum then of the whole is this, Our Lord speaks of Himself, and of the Father, as of two distinct Persons ; afterwards he asserts that he and the Father were one*. The Words truly are very emphatical in the Original, *Ἐγὼ καὶ ὁ πατήρ ἐν ἑσμέν*, I and the Father are one Thing, the same Essence ; and the Jews immediately inferr'd, that he said he was God Supreme, or Jehovah. Our Lord approves their Construction of his Words ; he does not go about to rectify their Conceptions, but on the other hand, confirms them by several Arguments in the Truth of what he had said : And perhaps 'tis no easy Task for us to know the true Emphasis of that Expression, with which he left them, viz. *That ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him.*

ver. 38.

We are finite Beings, and God is an infinite Being, and I believe there is one thing that very much confounds our Thoughts with respect

* [And tho the Ho'y Ghost is not personally mentioned here, yet I believe all Parties will allow him to be one with the Father and the Son, in the same Sense that they are said to be one here, be that what it will.]

to this Article of Faith; that is, we endeavour to measure the Divine Existence by our own: whereas, seeing God is an Infinite Being, it is very possible that his Manner of Existence may differ infinitely from ours; and therefore we ought to express ourselves with the greatest Regard, when our Discourse is concerning Him, seeing Cyprian says, *Vera dicere de Deo ob Summam ejus unegam etiam sit Periculosum.*

I have but briefly mentioned this Conference of our Lord's with the Jews now, which seems of such considerable Importance: Perhaps I may do myself the Honour to write you my Thoughts more fully on that Subject another time; and at present I remain,

SIR,

With all due Regard,

Your most Humble Servant,

JOHN BRYAN.



I shall beg leave to add to the above Letter, the following Postscript.

HA V I N G, in my Letter, mentioned the Piece you call the *Western Inquisition*, I shall make a Remark or two upon it.

† You tell us two of your three Friends were well satisfy'd with the Account you gave in your Sermon of the *Satisfaction of Christ*. It is well they were so: but I must needs say, in some Audiences where I have heard the Gospel preached, some Parts of it would have looked very jejune on that Subject; and if Convenience will allow me, I will promise, either to make some Reflections on your Discourse, or publish my own Thoughts on that Subject.

In the next place, I must needs commend the plausible *Exit* you have made in recounting the several Authors, which either favour or fall in with your Hypothesis, with respect to the Inferiority or Subordination of the second Person of the Sacred Trinity.

You conclude that long Detail, by casting in three eminent Divines by the lump, without giving us their Sentiments in particular, or referring us to any part of their Writings. Your Words are these:

* *I have omitted the Testimonies which might be brought from Calvin, Zanchy, Turretin, and other*

† *Western Inquisition*, pag. 26.

* *Western Inquisition*, pag. 37, 38.

foreign Divines, which might have made this Digression much more tedious than it is.

You are very lucky in having such eminent Men on your side of the Controversy ; and, as you insinuate, they are very copious in your favour, because their Sentiments for your Hypothesis, would have very much swell'd the Digression. One of these three you have mention'd, was deservedly among the ablest Hands, that helped to open the Reformation abroad ; and the other two, are among the greatest Lights that have shined since. The last of which in particular, on account of his eminent Piety and great Learning, has gain'd the universal Applause of all the Reformed Churches in Europe ; and even his Adversaries have extoll'd him as a Person of solid Judgment, which appears in his fair way of Arguing, and Candour in stating of the Controversy.

Till such time as you produce that Author's Sentiments in favour of your *Hypothesis*, I shall take leave to entertain you with his Sentiments in his own Words, directly opposite to your Opinion on that Head.

In his Question *De Deitate Filii ;*

|| An Filius sit verus & æternus Deus, Coessentialis & Coæternus Patri ? *affirmamus contra Socinianos.*

He goes on to state the Controversy thus :

I. Ut Divina Majestas, & Gloria Filii Dei, Redemptoris nostri, adversus Pestilentissimos Hæreticos, qui eam execrandâ Impietate oppugnatum eunt, asseratur, Quæstionis status ritè

|| Turretin, 1st Part of his Theolog. Elench. Questio 28. pag. 310, 311. 2d Geneva Edit.

tenendus est, ut quæ sunt *Æqualia* & non controversa à controversis secernantur, & genuina eorum Sententia, quam Verbis ambiguus sæpè obtegere solent, ut Simplicioribus imponant, deprehendatur.

II. Non quæritur, An Filius sit Persona Divina, & an possit vocari Deus? hoc enim profitentur se credere Adversarii; unde *Smalcus* Tractatum fecit de *Divinitate Christi*, & de Christo

Which I think may be Englished thus :

Concerning the Deity of the Son.

Whether the Son be the true and eternal God, Coessential and Coeternal with the Father? this we affirm against the Socinians.

I. *That the Divine Majesty, and Glory of the Son of God, our Redeemer, may be maintained against the most Pestilent Hereticks; who, by an hellish Impiety, go about to oppose it: 'Tis requisite that we very fairly state the Controversy, that so we may separate between those Things, which are foreign to the Controversy, and indisputable; and those Things which are really controverted: as also that the Genuine Sentiments of these Hereticks may be expos'd, which very often they varnish over with dark and ambiguous Expressions, that they may the easier impose upon simple and unwary Persons.*

II. *The Controversy is not then, Whether the Son is a Divine Person, or whether he may be called God; this our Adversaries very readily assent to, and tell us they believe all this; and therefore Smalcus, in a Treatise he has composed concerning the*
 Divi-

Christo vero & naturali Dei Filio, & contra Franzi, Disp. I. p. 5. Filium, inquit, Personam esse non diffitemur, eamq; Divinam, &c. & Socinus contra Wiek, cap. 5. Dicimus concedere nos Christum esse Naturalem Dei Filium. Sic sæpè ea Christo tribuunt, quæ videntur veram ejus Divinitatem arguere. Si tamen penitus in Sensum eorum inquirimus, facilè patebit Verba tantum esse, & Voces ad Fucum faciendum excogitatas, ut videantur in primario Religionis Christianæ Capite, ad nos accedere, licet re ipsa quàm longissime distent. Nam quicquid de Christo prædicent, certum est eos non ultra Humanam ejus Naturam assurgere, & Divinitatem tantum precariam & dependentem illi adscribere, respectu miraculosæ suæ Conceptionis, & Divinitatis,
vel

Divinity of Christ, and concerning Christ the true Son of God by Nature, against Franzi, pag. 5. We allow the Son, saith he, to be a Person, yea, and a Divine Person too, &c. Nay, even Socinus himself, writing against Wiek, cap. 5. We readily grant, saith he, that Christ is the Son of God by Nature. And at this rate, very often they ascribe those things to Christ, which seem to proclaim him to have a Nature truly Divine. But after all, if we take their Meaning into a more narrow Inspection, we find that the whole is only Words and Sounds, artfully invented to colour over the Cheat, that thereby they may appear to join with us in the principal Article of the Christian Religion, tho at the same time they keep at the greatest distance. For whatsoever they declare concerning Christ, it is very sure their Sentiments rise no higher than his Human Nature, and then they assign him only a precarious Deity, which results either from his miraculous Conception, or
from

vel respectu Muneris, quod illi impositum fuit; sed quæ ad ὁμολόγητον cum Patre non referatur, qui est Quæstionis Cardo.

III. Ut ergo fucus omnis illis detrahatur, Quæstio non concipi debet, An Filius sit Deus? sed an sit verus & æternus Deus Patri coëssentialis? Non an possit dici Naturalis Dei Filius quodam Sensu, qui Divinitatem precariam, & dependentem, ab eo habuerit, ratione *Pre-eminentia, Authoritatis, Dominii, & Muneris*; sed an sit proprius Filius, qui eandem Numero Essentiam cum Patre, non in Tempore, sed ab Æterno, per ineffabilem Generationem ab eo acceperit? Quod Sociniani, cum veteribus *Arianis*

from the Function which was allotted him; but they mention nothing of such a Divinity as constitutes him to be the same Essence with the Father, which is the very Hinge of the Controversy.

III. That our Adversaries therefore may be stript of every Disguise, the Question ought not to be propos'd, Whether the Son be God, but whether He be the true and eternal God coessential with the Father. And then again, The Question is not whether he may be called in some respect the Son of God by Nature, because he has from him a dependent and precarious Divinity, on account of his Preheminence, Authority, Dominion, and Function: But the Question between us is, Whether he be the proper Son of God, who has the same Numerical Essence with the Father; and that not in Time, but from Eternity, by an ineffable Generation: which the Socinians, together with the ancient Arians, deny. Ostord. Instit. c. 6.

nis negant. Ostorod. Instit. c. 6, & 7. Volkel. Lib. de Relig. c. 10. Nos vero affirmamus.

IV. Ad Socinianos non obscure accedunt Remonstrantes; quamvis enim velint videri differre ab ipsis, Generationem Filii asserendo, tamen in ea explicanda satis produnt suum cum ipsis consensum, dum negant ὁμοούσιον Filii cum Patre, & statuunt Filium, non Ordine modò, sed & Dignitate & Potestate differentem à Patre, eique non co-ordinatum, & consubstantialem, sed Subordinatum tantum, ut Episcopus expon. Lib. 4. Instit. c. 32 & 35.

V. Filium verum esse & ὁμοούσιον ac Æternum cum Patre Deum quatuor ista, quæ ipsi tribuuntur,

& 7. Volkel. Lib. 5. de Relig. c. 10. And we on the other hand affirm it.

IV. The Remonstrants in this Controversy openly associate themselves with the Socinians, tho they seem inclin'd to shift them off, by pretending to give a more plausible Account of the Generation of the Son; but in explaining of it they wretchedly betray their Harmony with them, and herd together, seeing they deny the Son to be of the same Essence with the Father, and they determine that the Son differs from the Father, not only with respect to Order, but also with respect to Dignity and Power: and they are so far from allowing him to be Coordinate, and Consubstantial with, that they only allow him to be Subordinate to the Father, as Episcopus expounds it, Lib. 4. Instit. c. 32 & 35.

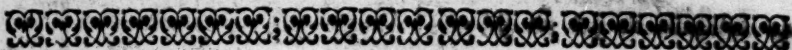
V. That the Son however is both of the same Essence, and true, and eternal God with the Father, these

tur, & soli Deo competunt, invictè demonstrant, &c.

* Personæ ut sunt ὁμοῦσαι, ita summa datur inter eas æqualitas. p. 309.

these four Things, which are attributed to him, and are proper only to God, do invincibly demonstrate.

* *As the Persons are of the same Essence, so there is the most perfect Equality between them.*



SIR,

I thought myself in conscience obliged to vindicate that Author from an Imputation which he does not deserve; for tho you have made use of his Name to vindicate your Scheme, yet I believe both you and I know there is nothing to which he is more averse; and it were pity but some kind Hand translated the whole Question, the State of which I have now done, that so he might have an Opportunity of apologizing for himself, in the same Language in which he has been aspersed; and perhaps it may be done.

As to the other two Authors you mention, in the end I believe you will not come a great deal better off.

SIR,

If you please to reply to what I have writ I hope you will do it without a long Harangue of Words, which I have industriously avoided. The Point that I have discuss'd, is, I think, decisive of the whole Controversy in all its Branches; and therefore I have argued as closely and briefly upon it as I can, and expect you will do the like.

F I N I S.
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